

A

# REVIEW

## OF THE

# STATE

## OF THE

# BRITISH NATION.

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Saturday, January 31. 1708.

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**I**N pursuing the Subject of Prohibitions in Trade, I am distinguishing of the Necessary and the Injurious, and came in my last to a Discourse of the Prohibition of *East-India* Goods; I answer'd the Objection rais'd from the Days of King *Charles II.* and King *James*, and shew'd you something of the Encrease of the Trade upon us, *how it grew insensibly upon the Nation*; and whether it might have grown you all have seen, tho' by Way of *Errata*, I must correct one Thing in my Calculations, *Viz.* Of 57 Ships in 11 Months, and I do it here to let you see I am as careful as I can, to let nothing slip that should seem to impose upon you, or by a Mistake to enlarge the Proportions which our Cause has no need of; and therefore I am to note, it should have been printed 2 Year and 11 Months, but if any

one reckons up what 57 Ships in that Time is, *to be sent to the Indies*, they will find no Room for an Error of the Press to cavil at the Proportions.

Farther to make out my Simily between a Fever and a Plague, I come now to examine into the real Decay of our Manufactures, and the Damage we suffer'd under the Encroachment this made on our Trade—And then I shall give a most unanswerable Proof, that this, and this only, was the Cause of that Decay, and that it was visibly going on to the entire supplanting the very Name of a Manufacture out of some Parts of the Nation.

There were two Things which contributed chiefly to the Mischief I am talking of, and which gave the *East-India* Trade such an Advantage over our Manufactures; One

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was the encreasing the Stock of the Traders thither; by *first*, the Old Company calling 640000*l.* into their Trade, the New Companies being erected upon us at the same Time, and both being encouraged by the Demand and the great Prices of their Goods. The *Second* was the general Fanie of the People running upon *East-India* Goods to that Degree, that the Chints and painted Calicoes, which before were only made Use of for Carpets, Quilts, &c. and to cloth Children or ordinary People, became now the Dress of our Ladies, and *such is the Power of a Mode*; we saw our Persons of Quality dress'd in *Indian* Carpets, which but a few Years before their Chamber-Maids would have thought too ordinary for them; the Chints were advanced from lying on their Floors to their Backs, from the Foot-Cloth to the Petticoat, and even the QUEEN Her self at that Time was pleased to appear in China and Japan, I mean China Silks and Callico.

Nor was this all, but it crept into our Houses, our Closets, and Bed Chambers, Curtains, Cushions, Chairs, and at last Beds themselves were nothing but Calicoes or Indian Stuffs, and in short almost every Thing that used to be made of Wool or Silk, relating either to the Dress of the Women, or the Furniture of our Houses, was supply'd by the Indian Trade.

What remain'd then for our People to do, but to stand still and look on, see the Bread taken out of their Mouths, and the *East-India* Trade carry away the whole Employment of their People? What had the Masters to do but dismiss their Journey men, and take no more Apprentices? What had the Journey-men to do but to sit still, grow poor, run away and starve; of which presently by it self.

While this general Gust of the Nation run thus upon their own Ruin, it cannot be supposed, but the Companies, who generally have their Eyes open to their Interest, mutually agreed in this, *tho' they were at open War with one another in other Things*, that their Business was to make *Hay while this Sun shin'd*; and now it was they borrow'd Money on Bonds, doubled their Stocks, and instead of a few Ships, began to

send whole Fleets every Year to the *East-Indies*—It would be needless to enter into the monstrous Growth of the Trade in about 5 or 6 Years Time; let any Man but look into the Cargoes exported and imported in the Years 98, and 99, or between 1697, and 1699, and they will find the Account so surprizing, that a Man hardly dare put it in Print; it seems to carry with it something incredible, or rather impossible, *viz.*

That from *December* 1697, to *January* 1699, was exported in Bullion only, besides Goods, and by the Companies, beside private Trade, seven Millions, one Hundred fifty seven Thousand, three Hundred seventy two Ounces of *Plate*.

That the Cargo home of the fifty odd Ships, *which went out as above*, by general Calculations made by better Hands than mine, at that time, amounted to in the Hands of the Retailer above seven Millions *Sterling*.

That several single Ships, such as the *Martha*, the *Tavestock*, and others, brought Home two Hundred Thousand Pieces of Goods at a Time, directly interfering with our Home Manufactures, and besides the Humour of the Times being on many Accounts to be sold beyond all Proportion, cheaper than any thing could be made here.

Add to all this, that to encrease our Misfortunes at that Time, and to compleat the Destruction of our Manufactures, the Companies could not pretend, that this was in the least a Return for any thing of our own Growth; had it been so, our People would still have had some Employment, and the Export might have been something of an Equivalent to satisfy the People—But while not a Pennyworth of Goods went out for it, the whole Weight lay upon our People, and our Manufactures fell: such a general Decay, that he, who shall read the next of these Papers, may perhaps be something surpriz'd at.

Let no Man wonder, the Parliament, as soon as they were made sensible of this, came readily into the Prohibition, nor let them doubt, that any future Parliament, while these Things may be made plain to them,



them will ever come into a Repeal of it—Nay, I cannot think, that even the Members of the Companies themselves, as *English* Men, as *Britains*, and take them abstracted from their private Interest as Members, can desire it, they cannot but blush when they look back at the Havock they had made among us in Trade, and how the Gain, they made, was out of the Life-Blood of the Nation.

As to those who presum'd, that an Offer of Money to the Parliament would purchase them any thing, and then had this in their View, they should have consider'd two or three Things.

*First*, Their scandalous Opinion of the Parliament deserv'd some Resentment, that they could imagine they would supply the

publick Demands at such a Price, or that they could be ignorant of the Consequences.

*Secondly*, They ought to remember, that the Fund, they have enjoy'd so long, and the extravagant Interest of 8 per Cent. they have receiv'd, gives Room enough for the Government to demand the Money they are now to advance, without granting them any other Favour, than the adding to their Political Life a new Lease of 21 Years, and they ought to be very thankful for the Bounty; but of this hereafter.

I shall in my next lay before you a brief Account of the low Condition, this Encrease of the *East-India* Trade had brought our Manufactures to, and prove, that they were the single Occasion of it.

## MISCELLANEA.

I Have sometimes in this Paper taken the Liberty gently to touch at some Cases, which some of our Men of the University of Oxford have been pleased to make in their Morals—And who, no doubt, remember, that I have also done them Justice, when they have been pleased to reform some Abuses, that struck at their Reputation as well as Interest, I mean, as to the Affair of the *Play House*.

I cannot but give a short Hint here to these Gentlemen by Way of Advice, whether they will please to accept it or no, I know not—But I am sure, it concerns them to examine the Matter of Fact, however they may condemn the Monitor.

In short, I would humbly recommend to them to examine, whether it is not a Scandal to their University in general, and worth their Enquiry after Persons in particular, if in a certain Publick-House in their City, having King *William's* last Speech to his Parliament hanging up in the open Room with his Majesty's Picture over it, certain of the Gentlemen of ———, a College, some of whom perhaps are not so conceal'd as they imagine, much less their Behaviour, have thought fit to show their Manners, as well as Principles, by offering

to the Picture the vilest of Indignities, stabbing it in several Places of the Face, cutting off its Nose, and the like, Things they only wanted Courage, not *Villany* to do upon Him when alive.

Then I recommend to them to examine into certain Obliterations and Interpellations made in the Speech, and filed up with the most wretched, filthy, and worse than beastly Expressions, which they would represent as from his Majesty to the Parliament, such as modest Ears would abhor to hear, and as I have not Share enough of true Oxford to write.

Then let them enquire, why the Master of the House suffers this Spectacle to remain in his House, who of his Guest it pleases, what Company it brings to his House, who entertain themselves with the Sight, and make Sport at the Fact—And last of all, let them, IF THEY PLEASE, show the World, whether they approve of it or no—If they do not think fit to notice it, I shall be sorry for their own Sakes, and if they want farther Particulars, they shall have them at Demand.

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If they please to send up an Account of these things to Mr. *Rehearsal*; he is compleatly qualify'd to vindicate such Proceedings as these, and perhaps will deny or evade the Fact for them, as he did of the Affair of *Taunton*.

It is very unfortunate, that these things should come to Town just against the 30th of *January*, when the Doctrine of Maltreating of Princes is so particularly the Subject of the Party, both in the Pulpit and out of it.

It is not the first Assassination King *William* has suffer'd in Effigie, nor is it any thing less than we ought to expect from such People; however, as to the University of *Oxford*, I'll prevent Mr. *Rehearsal* in this, that I shall not say it is a Charge on the whole——But I shall be more particularly obliged to vindicate them as a Body, when they have discover'd their Aversion to the abominable Fact, by examining the Particulars, and showing their just Resentment at the Persons.

Such ought to be detected and punish'd for their Breach of good Manners, as well as the vile Ingratitude to the Memory of Him, by whose Endeavours, and at the Price of whose Hazards, the Protestant Religion, the Liberty of the University and of the whole Nation was restor'd.

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